

REMARKS

Applicants have amended claim 1 and have added new claim 30. Claims 1, 4, 5 and 29-30 are now pending in the application.

Applicants appreciate the courtesy of a telephone interview granted by the Examiner on October 24, 2007. In the interview, claim 1 and the cited references were discussed. The Examiner tentatively agreed that the claimed pre-load pad is not disclosed or suggested by the cited references.

Claims 3 and 6-27 were rejected in the Office Action as being indefinite. Applicants point out that claims 3 and 6-27 were not elected in the Response to Election Requirement filed on May 8, 2007. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Claims 1, 4-5 and 29 were rejected in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 7,100,734 to Segawa. Claims 1 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by WO 03/047948 to Eda et al. Claims 5 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eda et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,390,230 to Shimizu et al.

In view of the arguments presented during the interview, applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is not anticipated or rendered obvious by the cited references, either alone or in combination. None of the references describes or suggests a pre-load pad having a substantially non-circular inner peripheral

face. New claim 30 also is not anticipated nor rendered obvious by the cited references, as discussed during the interview.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 30 are allowable. The remaining pending claims depend from allowable claims, and at least for that reason are also submitted to be allowable.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #038920.56406US).

Respectfully submitted,

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